

The Watergate

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Causing one of the most extraordinary congressional investigations in the political history of the United States, the Watergate became the unprecedented event, which demonstrated the unbiased approach to the judicial matters and led to great transformations of the US legislative system.

The term 'Watergate' refers to a range of political scandals related to the corruption, which occurred during the period from 1972 to 1974. The Watergate is closely related to the infamous burglary in the Watergate Hotel in Washington DC, when criminals broke into the offices of the Democratic Party's National Committee.

On June 17, 1972, five burglars entered the Democratic National Committee office at the Watergate hotel, ceasing above "\$3,500 in cash and high-end surveillance and electronic equipment" (United States Senate, 2017). The local security called the police to detach the criminals. Investigating the case, the FBI discovered the relations between the burglary and the reelection campaign of the current US President Richard Nixon. The President's administration disproved the information. In November 1972, Nixon won the elections regardless the shameless events. However, the incident had the detrimental continuation. On January 10, 1973, the Watergate trial began, dealing with the case of infamous burglars. Chief Federal District Judge John Sirica did not believe the testimony, declaring that certain facts had been concealed. The defendants pleaded guilty. On February 5, 1973, Senator Edward Kennedy introduced Senate Resolution, requiring the detailed investigation of the Watergate case. Being at the age of 76, Senator Ervin chaired the commission that examined the Watergate case. According to Secretary of the Senate Frank Valeo, Senator Ervin had the unassailable reputation, enjoying the great

respect of his colleagues. Under his chair, the Watergate investigation revealed a range of scandal facts, comprising surveillance and wiretapping.

In February 1973, all the members of the Senate voted for originating the special committee. They adopted the resolution, giving four representatives of the Democratic Party and three members of the Republican Party the right to interrogate witnesses and study the materials related to the Watergate case. To initiate the process, the committee obtained the financial support equal to \$500,000 (United States Senate, 2017). The commission was responsible for submitting the final report about the Watergate case's investigation by February 28, 1974. According to the resolution, the committee possessed the extraordinary power to investigate the events related to the Watergate, revealing all the illegal and unethical behavior, taking place during Nixon's reelection campaign in 1972. Political espionage and finance practices were under the Senate's control to clarify all the events connected with the scandal.

Samuel Dash performed the functions of the committee's chief counsel. To prevent potential misfeasance, he insisted on sharing all the secret materials through the extensive mass media coverage. The national newspapers published the reports about the investigation's discoveries, while the US television and radio broadcast the proceeding during the fortnight in May 1973. Above 150 national affiliates of the Public Broadcasting System were involved in the scandal's revealing, informing the community about the state of affairs in the Watergate case's investigation. According to the statistics, approximately 97% of the US citizens watched and listened to the hearings of the Watergate case (United States Senate, 2017).

The Senate Watergate Committee enjoyed the enormous popularity, getting the community's respect, support, and confidence. The US citizens approved the activities of the

commission regardless the constitutional crisis, which originated due to the scandal between the committee and the White House administration.

Making obstacles to the investigating process, the US President Nixon refused to testify. The President insisted on the constitutional separation of powers, while Senator Ervin argued that executive privilege did not conceal the criminal activities of the top executives. Moreover, Senator Ervin declared that he would implement his right to involve the armed officers for arresting the officials who refused to testify. Despite the treats, Nixon banned the access of the representatives of the Senate Watergate Committee to the presidential documents. The former White House counsel John Den III revealed the information related to Nixon's awareness of the Watergate events and the US President's personal involvement of the burglary. Moreover, Alexander Butterfield, who had been employed as an aide, testified that Nixon had given the order to place a voice-activated recorder system in the White House.

On August 9, 1973, the Senate Watergate Committee took the extraordinary step, suing the current US President in federal district court to be interrogated about the transcripts of the White House tapes and presidential papers. However, this deed was not success because of the lack of jurisdiction.

The US President Nixon gave his response to the scandal events, making three speeches. In April 1973, he informed the community about the departure of Dean, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman. In August 1973 and April 1974, Nixon had to reveal partial transcripts of the White House tapes.

At the beginning of 1974, Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski addressed the Senate Watergate Committee to postpone the submission of the final report. The House Judiciary Committee initiated the impeachment inquiry, drawing attention of the world's public.

On June 27, 1974, the Senate Watergate Committee released the final report, dealing with the Watergate's events. In July 1974, the Supreme Court pronounced the verdict, claiming the President's giving the transcripts of the White House tapes to the prosecutor. Having examined the evidence, the court declared the information about Nixon's active participation in the planning of the Watergate events. As a result, the House Judiciary Committee initiated three articles about Nixon's impeachment. On August 9, 1974, Nixon declared about his leaving the White House.

To sum up, the Watergate scandal revealed the high degree of development of the US civil community, which supported the extraordinary steps of the Senate Watergate Committee. However, being the demonstration of the democracy, the Watergate caused the US President Nixon's impeachment that led to disastrous consequences in the global policy. In fact, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos would have been supposed to escape the communist invasion if the Watergate had not taken place.

References

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